



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

**DATE:** January 19, 2018  
**TO:** Division Superintendents  
**FROM:** Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**SUBJECT:** **Secondary Environmental Science Course Support Documents**

At the November meeting, the Virginia Board of Education approved the addition of the Environmental Science course to the list of Board of Education Approved Courses to Satisfy Graduation Requirements for the Standard, Advanced Studies, and Modified Standard Diplomas in Virginia Public Schools (see attachment). The new Environmental Science course, as well as the existing Advanced Placement Environmental Science course, may count as either an Earth Science or Biology discipline credit towards graduation. It is highly recommended that students planning to apply or attend college take four science courses to include Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and any other Board Approved Laboratory Science course.

In order to support the addition of the Environmental Science course, several documents are available to assist teachers, counselors, and administrators. The attached documents include the content guidelines for the course, frequently asked questions concerning the addition of the Environmental Science course option, and sample of course pathways that students may take in order to meet science graduation requirements for both the standard and advanced diplomas.

Content guidelines are also under construction for the Biology II: Anatomy and Physiology and the Earth Science II: Astronomy courses. These course content guidelines were constructed as tools to guide instruction. Feedback on any of the course guidelines is appreciated and will guide potential future Standards of Learning in these courses. These guidelines will be available at [VDOE Science Instruction](#).

For more information about Virginia's environmental education efforts or about the new Environmental Science Course, please contact Anne Petersen, Science Coordinator, Office of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, by email at [anne.petersen@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:anne.petersen@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-2676.

SMC/AMP/pf

**Attachments:**

- A. [Environmental Science Course Content and Process Guidelines](#) (Word)
- B. [Environmental Science Course FAQ](#) (Word)
- C. [Sample Science Course Pathways](#) (Word)